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Harvard College Library



FROM THE BRIGHT LEGACY

One half the income from this Legacy, which was received in 1880 under the will of

JONATHAN BROWN BRIGHT

of Waltham, Massachusetts, is to be expended for books for the College Library. The other half of the income is devoted to scholarships in Harvard University for the benefit of descendants of

HENRY BRIGHT, JR.,

who died at Watertown, Massachusetts, in 1686. In the absence of such descendants, other persons are eligible to the scholarships. The will requires that this announcement shall be made in every book added to the Library under its provisions.

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

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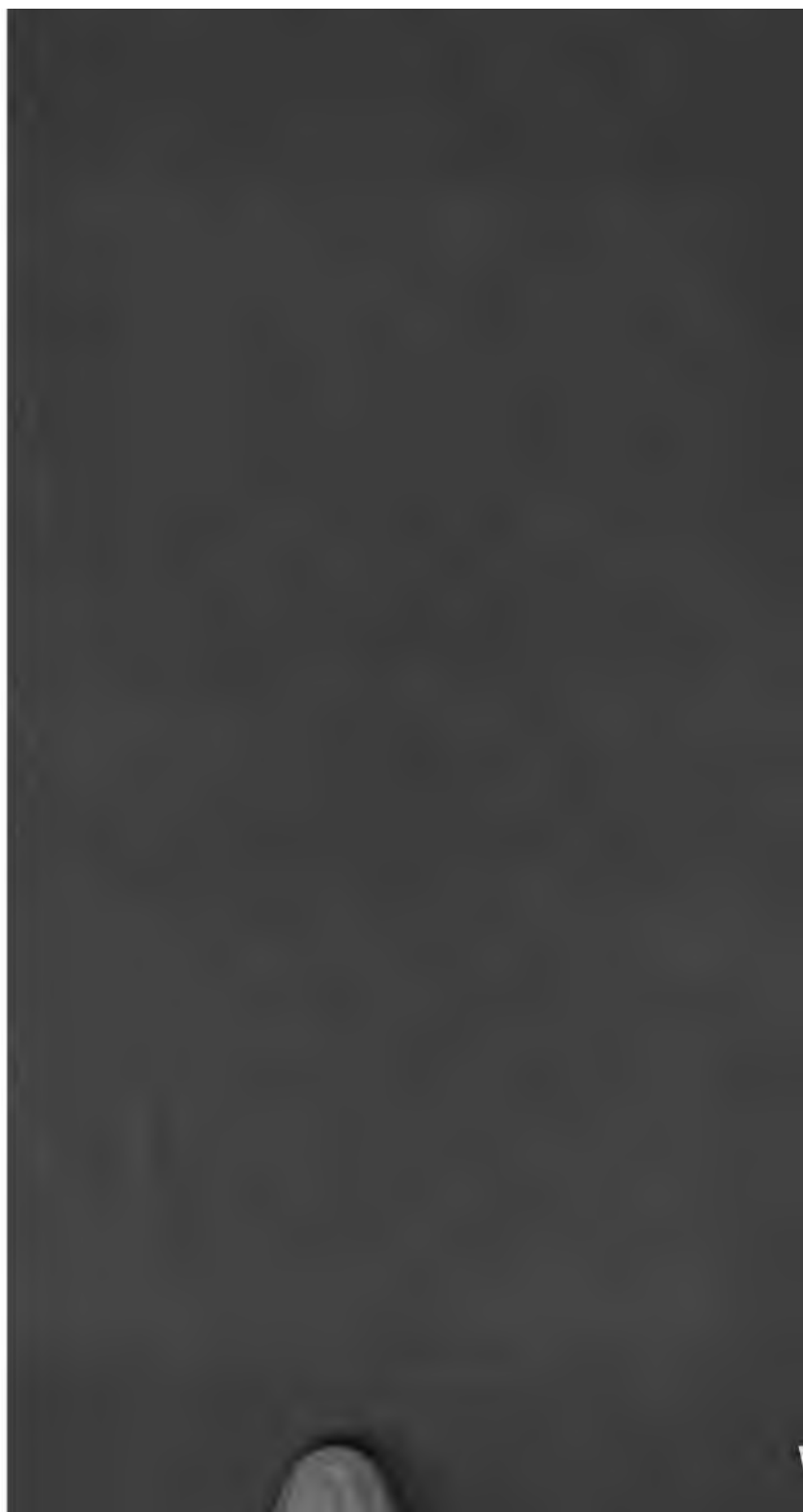
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AN

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED

ON THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1836,

AT PINE STREET CHURCH, BOSTON,

IN THE MORNING, AND

AT SALEM, IN THE AFTERNOON.

[BY REQUEST OF THE FRIENDS TO THE IMMEDIATE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.]

BY CHARLES FITCH,
Pastor of the Free Congregational Church, Boston.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY ISAAC KNAPP,
46, WASHINGTON STREET.

1836.

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Bright-fund

[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.]

ADDRESS.

‘WE HOLD IT TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT GOD HAS CREATED ALL MEN EQUAL, AND ENDOWED THEM WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS, AND THAT AMONG THESE RIGHTS, ARE LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.’

That is my text—and if ever one sentence was written in the English language, which expresses more than any other, the true spirit of those who would abolish slavery throughout the world, it seems to me to be this. It comprises just everything for which abolitionists contend. It covers the whole ground, and reaches the farthest possible extent of all their avowed principles, and of all the measures which they contemplate, or which they desire to see used, for the deliverance of their fellow-men who are held in chains.

Nothing ever was said, nothing ever was written, which aimed more directly to the entire and eternal destruction of the institution of slavery than this.

You might gather up all the anti-slavery papers and books, under which our Post Masters and Southern mail carriers have groaned so piteously ; and at which Southern slaveholders have uttered such cries of distress ; and add to them all the speeches of George Thompson on both sides of the Atlantic ; and

all the fire and fury of William Lloyd Garrison ; with every published number of the *Liberator*, and *Emancipator*, and *New York Evangelist* ; and every sentence that has ever been uttered by the whole company of fugitives from the Lane Seminary ; and every thing that ever has been or ever will be said by J. G. Birney, in his *Philanthropist* ; and all the speeches of Gerrit Smith, since his conversion ; in short, every thing that has ever been said, or written, or thought, by any man or woman that has dared open a mouth, or peep, on the subject of immediate emancipation, and steep them all together, and if you please, pass them all through deacon Giles' distillery, by his very best set of hands ; and you will not be able to extract from them, by any process or system of torture, any more direct, thorough-going, unshrinking abolitionism than is here brought to view. Just let the principles contained in this one sentence, prevail throughout the world, and slavery is dead, and buried, and consumed, and its dust scattered to the winds.

Just listen to it, ' We hold it to be self-evident, that God has created all men equal, and endowed them with certain unalienable rights, and that among these rights, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.'

Excellent—just the thing for which the abolitionist pleads, and is just every thing he asks. Let the light of that single sentence go over the land, and shine on every mind, and warm every heart, and slavery with its lengthened train of concomitant evils, would take fire and be consumed.

But who dared utter such a sentence ? Did it fall from the lips of some hair-brained young man ; some beardless advocate of the incendiary doctrine, that men ought to do right, and risk the consequences ? Not at all. It was deliberately discussed, and at length declared, by solemn vote of a company of cool grey-heads, met in council, to assert their own rights

and the rights of their country, in the ears of the world. It is a part, in short, of the Declaration of American Independence—that glorious instrument, which has been read by a thousand voices, in the ears of listening multitudes, every Fourth of July, for the last fifty years.

The glorious Declaration of American Independence, of which every citizen of these United States has been so proud, contains this very sentence. It even stands at the head of it, as the starting point, the grand reason of all the toils and sufferings of our fathers, to throw off what they regarded as the yoke of oppression. This bold and fearless declaration of the equal rights of men, stands imprinted upon the escutcheon of our country, in letters which the world may read. Yet while we present it to the eyes of all mankind, and make it our glory to urge it upon their attention, as the grand principle, the standing rule by which we are determined to live, and in defence of which we mean to die, we bind two and a half millions of our fellow-men in chains. We declare that they have been created with rights equal to ours, that our Maker endowed them with the same rich inheritance which he has given us; and then we strip them of all their rights, and make them, so far as we *can* do it, beasts, instead of men. We declare, that liberty and the pursuit of happiness belong to them inalienably, as the gift of God, and then we put a yoke on their neck, a fetter on their heel, and apply the scourge to their back, and wrench from them the fruit of all their toil. Such is America, in the eye of the world.

Were I to draw a picture of the exact attitude in which our country stands before the nations of the earth; I would show you a man standing erect, his head uplifted as if conscious of much dignity and self-importance, wearing a crown of large dimensions, on which should be emblazoned, in letters of gold,

the sentence which I have already repeated : ‘ We hold it to be self-evident, that God has created all men equal, and endowed them with certain unalienable rights, and that among these rights, are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’ In one hand I would have him hold a chained slave, and in the other a scourge ; his poor defenceless victim, cowering with fear, and writhing under the smart of the lash. In the background, I would represent a slave market, in which should be grouped, a company of half clad men, women, and children, weeping at the thought of everlasting separation from all they held dear ; the auctioneer upon his stand, crying out, ‘ who bids,’ and a company of purchasers, clothed in rich apparel, each wearing on his head a declaration of equal rights of men, and in the act of naming the sum he would give for a slave. On the other hand, might be seen, in the distance, a cotton plantation, with its usual number of men and women, toiling with uncovered heads, under the burning sun ; among whom should stand, the overseer, with extended scourge, wearing also on his head, the declaration of equal rights.

It seems to me, that here might be a scene for the genius of a West.

I could wish that such a picture were drawn, and poor as I am, and as I expect always to remain, I would be willing to give something, to have it hung up in the parlor, and if you please, on the back of every slaveholder in the land. It seems to me, that it might do something to show him how supremely ridiculous he looks in the eyes of the world ; and how inexpressibly wicked is his conduct, while with his lips he declares, that men are born with equal rights, inheriting them from the common Author of their being, and at the same time, enslaves and brutalizes his fellow-man, and grinds him down to the

earth, with a load of wrongs, which no language under heaven has power fully to describe.

But it is my design to direct your thoughts to certain truths, which grow directly out of the principle which I have named as my text.

1. If God has created all men equal ; then, the fact that He has created some with black skin, woolly hair, flat nose and long heels, does not prove that he made them for slaves. The only question is, are they men ? What makes men ? It is not the color of the skin : if so, it is impossible to tell who are and who are not men ; for the human complexion presents every variety of hue. It is not the shape of the features, for these are as various as the individuals of the race. Nor is it, for the same reason, the limbs, or any thing else that pertains to these mortal bodies, that makes us men : it is the spirit within that constitutes manhood. Aside from this, we all are brutes.

We claim then, that our brethren of color, are men—not because they look, and walk, and eat, and sleep as men—but because they show us the workings of an immortal soul ; because they think, and feel, and love, and hate, and suffer, and rejoice as men. Being men, therefore, God has made them with the same rights that he has given other men ; and he who will not allow them these rights, is a transgressor of that law which says, ‘ Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.’

The consciences of some slaveholders have taught them, that they cannot, without guilt, hold *men* in bondage ; and they have, therefore, tried to cajole themselves into the belief, that men of color have no souls.

I know a woman of color, who had the happiness, through the blessing of God, to escape from bondage, out of one of the slaveholding States. This woman said, that she had been

taught by those who held her in slavery, that she had no soul ; and, accordingly, when she had sometimes expressed a wish to go where the gospel was to be preached, she was told, that she need give herself no concern about such matters ; for, as she had no soul, preaching could do her no good. She believed, however, that she had a soul, and when placed where she could hear the gospel, and with none to lay their commands on her, and keep her away from the house of God, she became a regular attendant on the word of life, and soon embraced the way of salvation, by Christ, as a plan of redemption adapted to her case ; and gave interesting evidence of having become a child of God.

I read a fact of this sort but the other day. A lady who was lying upon her death bed, in great agony of spirit, knowing that she was not prepared to die, said to her female slave, who was attending her, ‘ how thankful you ought to be that you have no soul : you can die without these tormenting fears.’ Very likely among the fears of this dying woman, was that of meeting the deserved indignation of God, for holding his immortal creatures in bondage ; and therefore, in some measure, to quiet these fears, she still labored to make herself believe, that those whom she had thus injured were not immortal.

(Thus, even slaveholders, with all their hardness of heart, show sometimes, at least, that they are sensible that *men* ought not to be enslaved : and hence the effort to rid themselves of a sense of guilt, by trying to believe that their injured victims are but brutes. It is clear to every man’s understanding, that *men* have equal rights, and that he, therefore, who holds his fellow-man enslaved, is a monster of iniquity.

2. If God has created all men equal, then the fact, that a man’s mother, or his mother’s great grand mother, was stolen from the coast of Africa, and sold into perpetual slavery, does not

prove that he is the property of the man, or of a descendent of the man by whom his maternal ancestor was at first enslaved. This is the tenure by which slaves are holden. He who claims the mother, claims the children. Now just look at this. Because several generations ago, the woman from whom I chanced to descend, was forcibly torn from her home and country, and sold into bondage, ending only with life ; therefore, I, as a man, have no rights, but must submit to be trampled on, and beaten, and stripped of all I hold dear ;—driven to hard labor from early dawn till late at night, and all my earnings prostituted to the lazy, luxurious ease of a worthless wretch, who never made the world one whit the better by having a place in it, and who probably never will. That all this is literally true, in a great multitude of cases, nobody can doubt ; and if this is not as black injustice, and cruelty as base as the devil ever instigated wicked men to practice, then, pray let us know what is worse.

I know there are many, who mean to be considered among the better sort of slaveholders, who think, by kindness, to make up to their slaves what they forcibly withhold from them. But it seems to me, that I could regard it as nothing better than adding insult to injury, for a tyrant, after having stripped me of all the rights of manhood, to think to atone for the wrongs he was daily inflicting upon me, by a few kind words now and then, and some few efforts to render my wretched condition, in some measure, endurable.

I said a tyrant, and I wish to have it fully understood, that I consider the best slaveholder on earth, a tyrant. A tyrant is a man who forcibly deprives another man of his rights—and such is every slaveholder on the footstool.

But to the point. I say again, if God has given men equal rights, according to the Declaration of American Independence, then the wrongs inflicted on my mother cannot take away my

rights ; and the fact, that she was forcibly made a slave, does not prove that I am not a man.

But go to the slaveholder, and ask him ; on what ground do you call these men and women your slaves ? and he replies ; why, just because their mothers were slaves : and when he has said this, he thinks, as it would seem, that he has given the best of all reasons in the world for his claim. And so, just because my mother was most shamefully abused all her life long, therefore I have no right to anything better. Sound reasoning, truly. The slave is a *man*, and nothing in the condition of any being from whom he descended, can deprive him of the *rights* of a man ; and he who withholds these rights from him, does it with the same outright injustice and cruelty, as though I, or any man who hears me, were stripped of the rights of men, and sold into hopeless and perpetual servitude, this very day.

3. If all men were created equal, then no man can make me his property, by paying his money to a villain, who had deprived me of my rights. You call the horse thief a villain ; but when he takes your horse and sells him to another man, does he cease to be your horse because somebody else has paid money for stolen property ? Not in the least. He is your property still—and you have a right to him, and can take him ; though another has paid for him ten times or twenty times what he is worth. And if your horse is yours, after having been stolen and sold, are you not your own ? Are not your hands and feet and head your own ? Do they cease to be yours, just because somebody has chosen to pay money, for the privilege of holding you in bondage ?

But it is admitted, I believe, in all slaveholding States, that when a man takes another who was before free, and sells him into slavery, he commits a crime, and is punishable. But the Declaration of American Independence claims, that all men are

equally free, and that they receive this freedom from the God who made them—and so says common sense, and common honesty, and so says every dictate of humanity, and every principle of the religion of Jesus Christ; and nothing in the condition of a man's forefathers, or foremothers, can make him otherwise than a *man*, endowed by high heaven, from whom he received his being, with all the rights of man.

But if it is wrong to take a man before free, and make him a slave; then it is wrong to hold any man under heaven as a slave. The fact that his rights have hitherto been withholden from him, does not prove that these rights are not his from this time henceforth; and though a man may have paid to another his house full of silver and gold for my rights, they are my rights still; and he is a detestable tyrant who touches them, because he has the power to do so: and what is true of my rights, is true of every other man's rights, black or white.

4. If God created men equal, then the man who has hitherto claimed me as his property, is bound at once to relinquish his claim, and give up to me the control of myself; without remuneration. He has no more property in me, than I have in him, and can have none. If he has paid his money for me, though the sum be ever so great, I have not been benefited by it, and of course am laid under no obligation.

Among the better class of slaveholders are some, who think they have done a deed exceedingly meritorious, when they have granted a man his liberty, after he had paid over to them certain hundreds of dollars, which they paid for him to somebody else; or which he would now be worth in market as a slave. But suppose, my hearers, that any body should propose to us, to give up to us our rights as men, after we had paid over to him some eight hundred or a thousand dollars, for the privilege of calling our hands and feet our own. How would we

regard such a proposition? And if it would be wrong in the case of either of us, then it would be wrong in the case of every other man, black or white; because it is self-evident that God has created all men equal.

When a man buys a slave for the express purpose of setting him at liberty, it may be right for him, after receiving his liberty, to pay what was paid for him. Though the man who received the money had no right whatever to take it, yet it having been paid as an act of kindness to the slave, and expressly for his benefit; he who paid it, may justly receive it at the hand of him whom he has set at liberty. This act of emancipation, however, ought by no means to be deferred until the money paid for his ransom is earned. I can have no right to hold a man in bondage for an hour. If I purchase his liberty, I am bound to give it to him at once, and then if he remunerates me let him do it as a *man*, and not as a slave.

I know it is the custom, to some extent, among those who would choose to be regarded as very conscientious and benevolent men, to buy slaves, and hold them in bondage until they have earned the money paid for them, and then set them free. But it is at best a wicked practice, though followed even by ministers of the gospel, and those too of sufficient eminence to have their names lengthened by a D. D. No man under heaven has, or can have, a right on any ground whatever, to call another man his property, even during the twinkling of an eye. If a man is purchased from bondage, he ought instantaneously to have his freedom, with all the rights of a man; and then let him, prompted as he would be by every feeling of generosity and gratitude, do his utmost, suitably to recompense his deliverer. But it is degrading, and flagrantly unjust, to purchase a man as a thing, and then hold him in the contemptible condition of a thing, until he can earn money to buy himself into the privilege

of being a man. Whether practiced in high places or low, among the worldly or in the church of Christ ; it is at best a flagrant outrage on humanity, and ought to be despised by all who lay claim to the feelings of men.

5. If God created all men equal, then no one man, can have a right to subject another to his will, through pretence that he is unable to take care of himself. This seems to be a plea in the mouth of a multitude of slaveholders ; that as their slaves are incapable of providing for themselves, it is therefore right that they should possess them as their property, like so many cattle or swine. Even those who claim to be the best friends of the slave, are very ready to say that he ought not to have his liberty, until he has first learned how to conduct himself when free. Now I can ascribe to those who hold this notion, just about as much good sense, as I would to the mechanic, who should refuse to place tools in the hands of his apprentice, until he had learned to use them ; or as a distinguished abolitionist once said in my hearing, it is like the Irish mother, who would not permit her boy to go into the water, until he had learned to swim. The truth is—freedom is an element, in which the poor slave has never been permitted to live—and never can he know, or be taught how to demean himself as a *man*, until you first make a man of him. He is a thing now, subjected to the will of another, and acts as he is acted upon ; and never can you teach him how to use his own will aright, until you first give him the *privilege* of using it. At any rate, there is no power this side of the throne of God, which has a right, or which can by any means acquire a right, to say that the slave shall not this moment have his liberty and enjoy it, until by crime he forfeits claim to the preservation of his privileges as a man.

But the plea that the slave would be unable when set at liberty to provide for himself, is, in a vast multitude of cases, un-

questionably false. I like the remark of the colored youth in the Lane Seminary, who was once a slave. 'It is claimed,' said he, 'that we would be unable to support ourselves when set at liberty; and I cannot tell how that might be, but as it is, I know that we do support ourselves and those who enslave us in addition.' All this is literally true, and it seems to me, that if they can support themselves, and their masters, and their masters' households while enslaved, they might possibly take care of themselves, when permitted to enjoy their inherent and inalienable rights.

If the slave, however, by being kept in bondage, has been held disqualified to provide for himself, then it is the duty of the man who has enslaved him, after setting him at liberty, to provide for him, at least, until he can be instructed how to provide for himself. All this would be only restoring what he has taken away. The cry is often raised by those who seem to consider it a sort of knock-down reply to all the arguments of abolitionists; what! would you have the slaves turned loose, in all their poverty, and rags, and wretchedness, to stroll from place to place and beg their bread or starve? By no means. We advocate no such measures. We are neither such fanatics or incendiaries as to desire any thing of this sort. On the contrary, we believe that those who have hitherto held men enslaved, and consequently kept them in all this poverty and wretchedness, are bound, first to set them at liberty, and then provide for their maintenance, at least, until they are capable of looking out for themselves. It would be marvellous justice, indeed, at this time, after all their wrongs, to kick them out of doors, like a worn out horse or a useless dog, to live or die, hap-hazard, without home or friends or employment. The slaveholder is bound by every principle of justice and humanity, to restore all he has taken away or withholden. He has deprived his slaves of liberty—

the first right of man. Let him restore this first. He has withholden knowledge. Let him furnish them with means of instruction. Let him teach them husbandry and the mechanic arts, and see that they have opportunity to make such scientific acquirements, as shall prepare them to act their parts with respectability and usefulness among their fellow-men. Let him furnish them with employment at reasonable wages, and teach them how to appropriate their earnings to the best advantage for their own good. All this would be but paying an honest debt, and would be doing no more than every slaveholder in the land is bound by every principle of justice to set himself about, this very hour.

But perhaps the slaveholder would say, 'It would take all I am worth to do what you propose.' Then I would just say to him, you are not worth a farthing. Everything you have, is justly due to those whom you have hitherto held as slaves; and you are in justice bound to appropriate it at once for their benefit. It's an honest debt, and if you refuse to pay it, you are a dishonest man.

But perhaps he would say, 'I could not do for my slaves what you propose, unless I were to labor with my hands for their support.' Very well, I would reply to him; then you ought to go to work at once. They have labored long and hard to support you, and one good turn deserves another. They are under no more obligation to you as men, than you to them; and since they have been laboring for your support, it is but right that you should return the favor.

But the slaveholder might still say, 'the laws of the State, in which I reside, would not allow me to set my slaves at liberty.' Well, if slaveholders can make such laws, they can repeal, them and ought to do it forthwith. But though they remain unrepealed, I think a slaveholder in this day, need not be over-

much righteous in obeying human laws. If a man *suspected* of being a friend of the slave, enters a slaveholding State, he must be taken and subjected to every species of indignity—perhaps whipped at the stake, and perhaps, without law or judge or jury, condemned and executed. There is already a defiance of all law among them, and the man therefore who is disposed to do justice by his slaves, need be no great stickler for the observance of human enactments.

But no human laws can set aside the laws of God. He has said to every slaveholder, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,’ and though ten thousand human laws were made in opposition to this, no man on earth has a *right* to obey them; nor can he do it without defying his God. The slaveholder is bound to do justice to his slaves in defiance of human laws if they are against him, and any other course must subject him to the displeasure of the Most High.

But must he do right and risk the consequences? It is very plain that he must do *right* and risk the consequences, or else do *wrong* and risk the consequences. There is not another alternative: and though the immediate consequences of doing *right* might be unpleasant, yet in the end they are infinitely preferable to the consequences of doing wrong. The law of God is calling on the slaveholder to do justice, and if he gives no heed to the call, consequences are coming at which he might well tremble.

But here, possibly, would approach a multitude, clothed in the vestments of the church of Christ, and with the Bible in their hands, claim that slavery is a divine institution, and quote scripture to prove it. ‘God permitted the Israelites to hold slaves, therefore it is right for us.’ They might as well say, Solomon, King of Israel, had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines; therefore it is right for us to have as many

if we choose. Or they might say again, the Israelites slew the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, therefore it is right for us to put our enemies to death whenever we can.

The truth on the subject is this. The Canaanitish nations were devoted to destruction by the God who made them. He therefore gave a special commission to the Israelites, to go and put to death men, women and children, and possess themselves of their country. For the same reason, they were permitted to hold them as bond servants. It was a judgment from God upon the inhabitants of Canaan. But that God ever gave his permission to any thing like the system of American Slavery, is something that wants proof. It was by a special direction of heaven, that they were to buy bondmen, and bondmaids of the heathen. And when the slaveholders of the South can show the same authority for binding their fellow men, then it will be time enough to admit that they are doing right. But never, until they can show a special enactment, sent down fresh from the Supreme Legislator of the Universe, giving them express permission to hold the African race in slavery, ought they to be regarded in any other light than as outrageously wicked—as the basest among base men. They have no more authority from Scripture, for enslaving the Africans, than the Africans have for enslaving them.

But it will be said again ‘that even the New Testament sanctions Slavery, because it lays down rules of conduct for such as are in that condition.’ The spirit of the New Testament, would unquestionably direct every slave, to submit patiently to the evils of his condition, to be a faithful servant while he must, and never to attempt avenging himself, but to leave his wrongs with Him who has said ‘vengeance is mine, I will repay,’ and there is no abolitionist who would not give every slave this same advice. No where does either the New or

Old Testament teach the slave that he has not a right to his liberty. On the contrary, Paul, whose authority is quoted by the advocates of slavery, directs those who are in bonds to prefer freedom. 'If thou mayest be made free, use it rather. Art thou called being a servant, care not for it;' i. e. submit to it. So say I—and so says every friend of the slave. Submit to it, while you *must*, but prefer freedom, and look to God for it. But I would like to know, where there is a principle or a precept in the Bible, which gives one man a right to enslave another, or which prohibits the free from seeking the immediate emancipation of such as are bound?

I insist upon it, that the case of the Israelites has no more to do, in establishing the rectitude of slavery among us, than their promiscuous slaughter of the Canaanites would have, in justifying an offensive war with any nation with whom we are now at peace; or than the practices of Solomon, in justifying all the fornication and adultery of the present age.

6. If God has created all men equal, then those who enjoy the rights of freemen, are bound by the principles of God's government, to do all in their power, for the deliverance of such as are bound. 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' 'Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them.' 'As ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' Let us, then, my hearers, place ourselves, for one moment, in the condition of the slave. We are in bondage for life, without hope of deliverance. We are driven all the live-long, day through fear of the lash, to hard labor, from the beginning to the end of the year. Our allowance is a peck of corn-meal in a week, with a small quantity of meat—and the whole sum paid annually to meet all our expenses of food and clothing, is from twenty-five to fifty dollars. If we enter the marriage relation, it is, at best, a marriage not legalized by the statutes of the

land, and the object of our affections may, at any moment, be torn from our arms forever, and driven by the lash, we know not where, to be thrown into the possession of another, or, perhaps, subjected to the brutal lusts of some monster, without means of redress. Our children are beaten and abused before our eyes, or taken from us and sold to cruelty and hopeless servitude. Often we smart under the lash, and when every limb trembles with pain, we are driven still on to toil. When 'Tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep,' comes for our relief, we are driven up, unrefreshed, to begin our sufferings anew. If we attempt to escape, we are hunted down with dogs and guns, and writhe under the scourge, just so long as cruelty and rage please to stand by and give direction to lay it upon us. Even though put to death—and twenty of our brethren of unimpeachable characters witness the deed—there is no law by which our murderers can be brought to justice—and if under all our heavy woes, we dare assert our rights, or lift a finger in self defence, we are exposed to any cruelty, even to death, with none to heed our sufferings, or offer us relief. That all this is true in the condition of every slave, I do not claim ; but that all this, and *more*, is true in ten thousand cases, nobody doubts. Suppose then, my hearers, that all these sufferings were ours ; what would we have those do for us, who knew our wretchedness, while they were enjoying all the rights and privileges of *freemen* ? Would we desire them to hold their peace, and never speak of our sufferings, or our rights ? Would we desire them to smother their voice, and be exceedingly careful to say nothing to disturb those by whom we were abused and outraged ? Or, when exposed to some trifling harm, for asserting our rights, would we have them succumb to our oppressors, and leave us still to endure and groan under all our wrongs ?

Would we not have them speak out, and tell the tale of our

woes in the ear of the world. Would we not have them proclaim the guilt of our oppressors with trumpet tongue, and charge it home upon them 'in thoughts that glow, and words that burn?' Would we not have the guilty authors of our sufferings pointed forward to a day of righteous retribution, and reminded of the terrors of God's coming wrath, until their very ears should be stunned as with the thunderings of Sinai; and their hearts made to quake, at the rising flames of heaven's deserved indignation? And especially, if our oppressors claimed affinity with Jesus Christ, and sought the sanctions of his religion for their doings, would we not have them shown in characters of noonday light, that Christ had no fellowship with such deeds of darkness, and that his followers could not own as brethren, the perpetrators of such cruel wrongs? What less than this could we ask, while enduring all the sufferings of the poor slave—of those who knew our condition, and were enjoying the rights of men? How can he love his neighbor as himself, how can he do as he would have others do to him, who knows the sufferings of the slave, and yet will not open a mouth to assert his rights? How can he be guiltless before God, who will not stand forth, in the name of humanity, and of the religion of Jesus Christ, and claim to have the oppressed go free? Among these oppressed ones are not a few of the humble disciples of Jesus. Though the key of knowledge has been kept from them, they have by some means learned so much of Christ, as to look to him for life. If these are neglected in their woes, if those who know their sufferings, will not come forth to their relief, will not Christ say, 'Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me.'

I know, it is said, that we make the condition of the slave the worse, by asserting his rights; but of this I have no fears. It may be so in some cases, but as a general thing, there will be

an effort made to show that the cruelties of slavery are not what they have been claimed to be. The conduct of the slaveholder is open to inspection. He knows that what he now does will go before the world, and he will therefore beware—and the condition of the slave will, in a measure, be ameliorated.

The voice of every freeman, and especially, of every free American, should rise on every gale, until a voice like that of many waters shall go round the earth, demanding liberty, liberty, for all that are oppressed. And if there be a professing Christian, who seeth his oppressed and suffering 'brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?'

7. If God has created all men equal, then he who strips another of his rights, or withholds them from him after they have been taken away, is ——— is what? I would not call names unjustly. Let us look, and see what he is. Walking at the close of day, I meet a man returning from his labor, having in his pocket a few shillings which he has that day earned. Of these few shillings I rob him. I am taken, tried, condemned, and sentenced to State's prison, perhaps for ten years, perhaps for life, perhaps handed over to the hangman. But there is my neighbor, a few miles off, who has been robbing ten or twenty or a hundred men of all their earnings, during their whole lives—and he not only goes unpunished, but is justified in his doings by the laws of the land. O, justice! whither art thou fled? Is not that a guiltier man than myself? A man steals ten dollars of my property, a loss which I do not feel, and he is punished for it according to law.* But there is another, who steals

* The following facts were related, in my hearing, by a man of color from one of the Southern States. This man has, by some means, purchased his own freedom and that of his wife; but his children, several of them, have been taken away from him, and sold, he knows not where. He proves himself to the satisfaction of all who have intercourse

my children from my arms, and my wife out of my bosom, and there is no law to touch him. (I say mine—for the man who should inflict such injuries upon *me*, could be no more guilty in the sight of God, than he who inflicts them on my brother of a darker skin.) He steals from me, also, every right of manhood, which my Maker gave me, and chains me up with the cattle in his stall. 'He who steals my purse, steals trash'—but he who steals my wife, my children, and myself, and dooms us all to a servitude, ending only with death; and steals the Bible out of my hands, and shuts away the news of salvation from my ears, after robbing me of all the means of knowledge on earth: what shall I say of him? I say he is a thief and a robber; the worst thief, and the worst robber upon which the sun has ever shone since God hung it in the heavens.

with him, to be a humble disciple of Jesus. I will give the facts, as nearly as possible, in his own words:—

'I had a little boy, about eleven years old. One night as he came home, he said to me, 'father, the constable has been measuring me to day.' 'Measuring you,' said I, 'what does that mean?' 'I don't know,' he said. 'He measured me about my body, and then he measured how high I was. I am afraid, father, they are going to sell me.' 'I tried,' said the poor father, 'not to think of it, but the next morning, soon after I went to my work, a little boy came running up to me, crying out, 'John is gone, yonder they are taking him off now. I went after them, and when I came near, my dear babe reached out his hands to me, and said, 'Father, I'm gone—can't you do something for me.' At this, the man who was taking him away, gave him a kick, and kicked him along the road, and I have not seen my dear child, or heard of him, from that day to this. I could do nothing to help him. It hurts me to think of it.' Here he wept. Never in my life has my heart been so agonized at any deed of man, as when I heard this grey-headed father give this simple relation. 'I had a daughter also,' said the poor old man, 'who was married, and had one child. One day a carriage drove up to the door, and took her in with her child, and carried them on board a vessel then lying at the wharf, about to sail. As soon as I heard of it, I went after them. When I went to go on board, they pushed me back—but some one standing by, said, 'that's too bad—let the old man see his daughter.' I then went on board, and my poor child threw her arms about my neck, and said, 'Father, I'm gone.' Here the old man's sobs prevented his utterance, but he recovered himself sufficiently to say, 'I have not seen or heard of my child since. Her husband heard of it, and went to the vessel, but they drew a dirk upon him, and would not allow him to go aboard.' 'Oh!' said the old man, as the tears streamed from his eyes, 'it *hurts* me, every time I think of it.' Probably, it would hurt a slaveholder to suffer such wrongs, and the best of them could be no more

Oh! let that man hold his peace who can, on such a subject as this. But it seems to me, that every heart which has a spark of humanity in it, must glow; and, that every bosom that has been warmed with the benevolent religion of Christ, must burn with desire to see the slave delivered from his *wrongs*.

But, perhaps, we are still called on for a plan, for benefiting the slave. You complain, say some, of everything which has hitherto been done for promoting the good of the slave, show us now a better way? This is easily done. Let every slaveholder in the land call those around him whom he has hitherto held in bondage, and say to them, 'henceforth you are free. I have hitherto regarded you as my property; from this time, I relinquish all such claim, and give up to you the entire control of yourselves. In time past, I have appropriated all your earnings to my own use—if you will now work for me, I will pay you reasonable wages, and teach you how to use your earnings for your own benefit. In time past, you have been kept in ig-

injured by them than this poor disciple of Christ. This man has, if (I recollect the number,) six children sold into hopeless servitude, he knows not where. Three remained with him, and these, some months ago, were bought up by a notorious firm of slave-dealers, and shipped for the Southern market. Here the old man felt that he had lost his all; and the distress of his wife, 'who wept,' to use his language, 'as though her heart would burst,' drove him with great reluctance, after endeavoring to put his trust in God, to state his case to some pious friends, and ask if something could not be done for him. A minister of the gospel, who was affected to tears at the old man's recital, went to the slave dealers and interceded for him. They at length consented, that if the poor father himself could raise the money in one week, (amounting to considerable more than two thousand dollars) he might have his own children, i. e. the ones last taken away. Perhaps they considered the question settled, as they would consent to no other conditions, and regarded it as impossible for the father to do as they proposed. He lifted his cries to God, however, and they were heard, and friends raised up, who gave him some few hundred dollars, and at length, made him a loan of what remained, amounting to eighteen hundred, on condition that it should be paid in two years. If at that time it remains unpaid, the children are to be sold to pay it. The poor father is now, with much diffidence, and great embarrassment, stating his case to the pious and benevolent, and asking their aid, that his children may not again be sold into bondage. If any heart is opened by this statement, to do any thing for him, information can be obtained respecting him at the *Anti-Slavery Office* in this city, or by addressing a line to the writer of this.

norance—henceforth you shall have the opportunity of acquiring knowledge, and of rising to respectability among men. Hitherto all your rights have been taken away, but henceforth you shall be treated as men—the relations of life shall be regarded among you, and your wives and children no more torn from your arms. You shall have the Bible and the gospel, and all the means of learning the way to heaven. In time past, I have been your oppressor ; henceforth I am your friend ; and it shall be my endeavor, by my subsequent course of conduct, to efface from your minds, all impression of the wrongs which I have hitherto done you.’

Now, who will say, that it would not be right for the slaveholder to pursue this course—and if right, then he is bound to pursue it, because the opposite is wrong.

But, perhaps, it will be said, that though all this looks very well in theory, there is no hope of seeing it reduced to practice. For myself, I believe that what ought to be done, may be done. I have confidence in the power of truth ; and especially, when I reflect, that God, with all the vast resources of wisdom and power, which he can command, is on the side of truth—I have hope, I have strong confidence, that truth will prevail ; and that the slave, with unfettered limbs, will, ere long, walk forth in the dignity of manhood, and spread forth his hands to heaven, and lift up his voice and his heart to the God who made him, and render praise that he is free.

But, it may still be said, that it is not to be expected, that the man whose whole property consists in slaves, will relinquish all, and make himself a beggar. If he has no property but what consists in slaves, then he is a beggar now ;—as really and truly a pauper as can be found in any alms-house in the United States. He is just as dependent on what belongs to others, as though he were obliged to beg his bread from door to door ; and is in a con-

dition *unspeakably more disgraceful*. He has no more property, than he would have, by laying claim to five hundred or a thousand acres of blue sky. All that can be said in truth, is, that in consequence of the existence of certain barbarous laws, he has it in his power to deprive a number of his fellow-men of their rights; and the power thus secured to him, of inflicting wrong and outrage, he calls property! Shame, on the civilized man, that will urge such a claim as this! shame, ten thousand times, on the civilized community, where such a thing is tolerated! and let the whole world point, and raise the cry of SHAME, against a nation of freemen, who will seal their lips in silence, and see *twenty-five hundred thousand* of the natives of their own soil thus claimed as the property of man. For myself, I believe that the day will come—Heaven speed it—when every American will feel his cheek mantled with the deep blush of shame, before the eye of the world, when he thinks that so foul a blot was ever seen upon his nation's character. I believe that it is to be expected, that he who has no property, but in the power secured to him by unrighteous laws, of depriving his fellow-men of their rights, will be ashamed to urge a claim so inhuman, and will rather glory in regarding himself and in having the whole world regard him as pennyless. I believe he can be made to see and feel, that it is *infinitely* beneath the dignity of a *man*, to subsist by trampling his fellow-man under foot, and to enjoy an ease, purchased for him by the toils, and tears, and groans, and heart-broken sighs, of oppressed and suffering humanity.

Again, it may be asked, what hope is there of doing away this mighty evil, and of procuring for the slave the enjoyment of his rights, by all this angry discussion at the North. I advocate no such thing as angry discussion on this subject, but I am wholly unwilling to admit, that telling the truth—the whole truth, and telling it plainly and fully, and fearlessly, is angry discussion—if

so—it seems that Christ and his apostles were often guilty of this sin. I believe there is no way, by which to show our love for Southern men, but to show them their guilt—and show them the whole—to hold it all up before them, and let them see just how black it is. It is the purest kindness toward them to do it, and the only course we can pursue toward them which is truly kind. There are men of conscience among them, and men of piety, and though these may for a while resist the truth, we do expect, that eventually, they will feel and acknowledge its force, and be ready to abide the consequences of acting in conformity with truth. This done, others seeing the light that is shed around them, will make truth their rule of life, and thus, at length, come up to their duty. We do not expect at present, to demand the abolition of slavery, in the name of human law—but we do expect to demand it in the name of humanity, and of God, and to urge our demand, until, by the blessing of Heaven, we win the day. We do expect to lay the truth before the minds of men, and to urge it, and pray for its success, until it shall be made mightier than the strong man armed ; and until every obstacle shall give way before its onward march, and all who now oppose, be made, either willingly, or unwillingly, to yield to its demands. We expect it, not through our own wisdom or strength, but through the might of Him who has the prerogative to make, and the power to enforce obedience to the command, ‘that the oppressed go free.’ He has once called in the aid of thunder and lightning, and storm ; of darkness, and disease, and death ; of the frogs and the locusts, and the mighty waves of the sea, to work deliverance for the captive : and he has the same resources still, and can command them when he please. Let such, therefore, as feel for the sufferings of the enslaved, make God their hope ; and truth, and light, and love, their weapons ; and complete victory their aim ; and death the

only point at which they will lay down their armor ; and the time will come, when the whole earth shall be vocal with the song of deliverance, and when their hearts shall have the joy, and God the praise, of a whole world, disenthralled, and walking forth alike gladsome and free, to enjoy the rights which Heaven gives to all. Who is there, that carries the heart of a man within him, that will not do something to bring about such a day ? Or, who is there, that bows the knee in prayer, who will not say, in the fervency of his soul, ‘ **HASTEN IT, OH, LORD !** ’

Anti-Slavery Celebration,

AT THE PINE ST. CHURCH, BOSTON,

JULY 4, 1836.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

I. HYMN. I.

HAIL to the Lord's Anointed !
Great David's greater Son ;
Hail in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun :
He comes to break oppression,
To set the Captive Free ;
To take away transgression,
And rule in Equity.

He comes with succor speedy,
To those who suffer wrong ;
To help the poor and needy,
And bid the weak be strong ;
To give them songs for sighing,
Their darkness turned to light,
Whose souls condemned and dying,
Wore precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth,
And love, and joy, like flowers,
Spring in his path to birth :
Before Him, on the mountains,
Shall peace, the herald, go,
And righteousness, in fountains,
From hill to valley flow.

To him shall prayer unceasing,
And daily vows ascend ;
His kingdom still increasing,
A kingdom without end :
The tide of time shall never
His Covenant remove ;
His name shall stand forever ;
That name to us is—Love.

II. PRAYER.

III. HYMN II.

THOU God, who hast since time begun ;
The helper of the helpless been,
Who will correct the tyrant, man,
That dares against thy mercy sin ;

*We pray for Slaves! to whom thy Word
Of light and Love is never given ;
For those whose ears have never heard
The promise and the hope of Heaven.*

*The broken heart and darken'd mind,
Whereon no human mercies fall,
Oh ! be thy gracious love inclined,
Who as a father pitiest all.*

And grant, oh, Father ! that the time
Of earth's deliverance may be near ;
When every land, and tongue, and clime,
The message of thy love shall hear :

When smitten as with fire from Heaven,
The Captive's chain shall melt in dust,
And to his fettered soul be given
The glorious Freedom of the Just.

IV. READING THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

V. ADDRESS.

VI. COLLECTION.

VII. HYMN III.

WITH thy pure dews and rains,
Wash out, O God, the stains
From Afric's shore ;
And, while her palm trees bud,
Let not her children's blood
With her broad Niger's flood
Be mingled more !

Quench, righteous God, the thirst
That Congo's sons hath cursed—
The thirst for gold !
Shall not thy thunders speak,
Where Mammon's altars reek,
Where maids and Matrons shriek,
Bound, bleeding, sold ?

Hear'st thou, O God, those chains,
Clanking on Freedom's plains,
By Christians wrought !
Them who those chains have worn,
Christians from home have torn,
Christians have hither borne,
Christians have bought !

Cast down, great God, the fanes,
That, to unhallowed gains,
Round us have risen—
Temples, whose priesthood pore
Moses and Jesus o'er,
Then bolt the black man's door,
The poor man's prison !

Wilt thou not, Lord, at last,
From thine own image cast
Away all cords,
But that of love, which brings
Man from his wanderings
Back to the King of kings ;
The Lord of lords !

VII. BENEDICTION.





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